



Department of Justice

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HIGH RANKING GUATEMALAN POLICE OFFICERS ARRESTED FOR CONSPIRACY TO IMPORT COCAINE INTO THE UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Three high-level members of the Guatemalan Anti-Narcotics Police (Servicio de Analisis e Informacion Antinarcoicos, or SAIA) have been arrested on charges of conspiring to import and distribute cocaine in the United States, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Administrator Karen Tandy announced today.

The three senior SAIA officials are charged in an indictment returned in the District of Columbia with conspiracy to import cocaine into the United States, and with conspiracy to distribute cocaine, intending that it would be imported into the United States., in violation of 21 U.S.C. 959, 960 and 963. The three officials were arrested in the United States Tuesday after arriving in the country from Guatemala.

The three defendants named in the indictment are Adan Castillo Lopez, a/k/a “Adan Castillo Aguilar,” Jorge Aguilar Garcia, and Rubilio Orlando Palacios. Castillo is Chief of the SAIA and the highest ranking anti-narcotics officer in Guatemala. Aguilar is the second in command at SAIA. Orlando is also a member of the same special police force and he was responsible for security sweeps at Santo Tomas, a port on Guatemala’s Caribbean coast.

The indictment and arrests are the result of a four-month long investigation by DEA agents in the United States and Central America into activities of the three defendants. The defendants are scheduled to appear before a magistrate judge at U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia at 1:45 p.m. ET today.

“Those in law enforcement who would sell their badges to aid in the illegal shipment of narcotics to the United States need to know that we are aggressively investigating their activities,” said Assistant Attorney General Fisher. “International borders will not stop our pursuit – U.S. law can be brought to bear against them, no matter where they operate.”

“More than corrupting the public trust, these Guatemalan Police Officials have been Trojan horses for the very addiction and devastation that they were entrusted to prevent,” said DEA Administrator Tandy. “In the battle against drugs, their actions are abhorrent – giving aid to an enemy they had sworn to fight against. Finally, they will face the same justice they had long ago abandoned.”

If convicted of the charged offenses, the defendants face a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison.

The investigation that led to the arrests was conducted by the DEA, working with the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. The Government of Guatemala assisted in the investigation.

An indictment contains only allegations. All defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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